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FLOOR DEBATE

February 9, 2004 LB 986

pages 575-581.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Next bill.

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 986, a bill by Senator Bourne. (Read title.) The bill was introduced on January 9 of this year, at that time referred to the Revenue Committee for hearing, advanced to General File. I do have committee amendments, Mr. President. (AM2364, Legislative Journal page 461.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Bourne, to open on LB 986.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you, Mr. President and members. LB 986 is a bill that basically expands the definition of "multiple amputee" for purposes of qualifying for the Homestead Exemption Act. It does two things. It changes the definition of "multiple amputee." The old definition that is in current statute said that a multiple amputee means a veteran who has undergone an amputation of both lower extremities, such as to preclude locomotion without the aid of braces, crutches, canes, wheelchair, or artificial limbs. The new definition would add upper extremities to the definition of "multiple amputee" so that it would now read: Multiple amputee shall mean a veteran who has undergone amputation of (a) either both lower extremities or one lower extremity and one upper extremity, such as to preclude locomotion without the aid of braces, crutches, canes, wheelchair, or artificial limbs, or both upper extremities. So, again, it changes the definition. In current statute, it was lower extremities. It adds the definition of upper extremities as well. The law also expands the definition as it relates to the construction, remodeling, or special adaptation of a home. As part of the homestead qualification process for a veteran, certification is needed to affirm that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has contributed to the purchase of a veteran's home. This poses a problem in that if a veteran purchased their own home but then subsequently becomes an amputee, then state law does not provide for a homestead exemption because the Department of Veterans Affairs did not pay for that individual's home. And so what this would do is say that if the Department of Veterans Affairs has substantially